

Message Text

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ACTION MED-03

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P 031014Z NOV 76
FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6551

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TAGS: AMED, APER, AFSP, MASS

SUBJECT: MEDICAL SERVICES IN KUWAIT

REF: (A) STATE 264580, (B) KUWAIT 4976, (C) 75 KUWAIT A-104.

1. FOR PLANNING PURPOSES, WE WOULD APPRECIATE M/MED'S
ESTIMATE OF HOW LONG IT WILL BE BEFORE A NEW RMO IS ASSIGNED
TO KUWAIT.

2. WE ARE CONCERNED THAT THE POST'S RECOMMENDATION
TO ABOLISH THE RMO SLOT, MADE IN KUWAIT A-104, 12/15/75,
IS NOW BEING SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED IN THE DEPARTMENT. THE
NEW COUNTRY TEAM HAS REVIEWED A-104, AND BELIEVES THAT
CHANGING CIRCUMSTANCES HERE MAKE ABOLITION OF THE RMO SLOT
IN KUWAIT UNWISE. OUR REASONING IS AS FOLLOWS:

(A) KUWAIT HAS THE THIRD LARGEST (AFTER IRAN AND SAUDI
ARABIA) CASH FOREIGN MILITARY SALES PROGRAM IN THE WORLD.
THE MILITARY CONTINGENT TO SUPPORT THIS PROGRAM CURRENTLY
CONSISTS OF 7 SERVICEMEN AND 18 DEPENDENTS. AT THE END OF
1977, WE EXPECT THAT THE MILITARY COMMUNITY
WILL EXPAND TO 32 MILITARY PRINCIPALS AND 96 DEPENDENTS.
THUS, THE SIZE OF THE OFFICIAL COMMUNITY IN KUWAIT IS GROWING
FASTER THAN OUR PREDECESSORS ANTICIPATED WHEN A-104 WAS
DRAFTED. THE 128 MILITARY PERSONNEL AND DEPENDENTS, ADDED
TO THE 126 PRINCIPALS AND DEPENDENTS FROM STATE, USIS, FHWA,
FAA AND AID CONSTITUTE AN OFFICIAL COMMUNITY OF 254
PERSONS, LARGE ENOUGH TO WARRANT THE RESIDENCE OF A FOREIGN
SERVICE PHYSICIAN HERE. OUR EXTENSIVE PLANNING FOR USLOK
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STAFFING BUILDUP HAS BEEN PREDICATED ON, AMONG

OTHER THINGS, THE RESIDENCE OF A FOREIGN SERVICE DOCTOR
IN KUWAIT.

(B) EMBASSY KUWAIT HAS A HEALTH UNIT BUILT IN 1974 IN A
CONVERTED STAFF APT, WHICH SERVES NOT ONLY AS A DISPENSARY
FOR LOCAL OFFICIAL COMMUNITY, BUT AS A BASE FOR THE RMO. THE
UNIT COST A TOTAL OF DOLS 10,000 TO CONSTRUCT IN ADDITION TO
WHAT WAS REQUIRED TO STOCK IT WITH MEDICAL EQUIPMENT
AND SUPPLIES. THIS UNIT CONTAINS A LAB, EXAMINING ROOM,
PHARMACY, NURSE'S AND DOCTOR'S OFFICES. IT WOULD BE AN
EXPENSIVE FACILITY TO RE-CREATE ELSEWHERE SHOULD THE
RMO POSITION BE MOVED.

(C) OF ALL THE POSTS THAT THE KUWAIT RMO SERVES, NONE
SEEMS TO BE BETTER SUITED THAN KUWAIT TO SERVE AS A
REGIONAL BASE. BAGHDAD, ABU DHABI, DUBAI, DOHA, MUSCAT,
MANAMA AND DHAHRAN ALL ARE TOO SMALL TO JUSTIFY A RESIDENT
RMO. OF THE LARGER POSTS IN THE REGION, TEHRAN AND JIDDA
HAVE RESIDENT MILITARY MEDICAL PERSONNEL. SANA IS
UNDOUBTEDLY A POSSIBLE RMO LOCATION DUE TO ITS SIZE AND
ISOLATION, BUT THIS LATTER FACT WOULD MAKE IT EXTREMELY
DIFFICULT FOR THE RMO TO SERVE THE REST OF THE REGION.
TO ILLUSTRATE: KUWAIT HAS 6 DIRECT FLIGHTS A WEEK TO
BAGHDAD, 6 TO ABU DHABI, 10 TO DUBAI, 4 TO DOHA, 10 TO
MANAMA, 4 TO MUSCAT, 4 TO DHAHRAN, 5 TO TEHRAN, 2 TO SANA,
AND 3 TO JIDDA. SANA ON THE OTHER HAND HAS NO FLIGHTS TO
BAGHDAD, DUBAI, MUSCAT AND TEHRAN, ONE A WEEK TO MANAMA,
TWO A WEEK TO ABU DHABI AND KUWAIT, AND THREE A WEEK TO
DHAHRAN. ONLY JIDDA, WITH 20 FLIGHTS A WEEK HAS REASONABLE
AIR CONNECTIONS FROM SANA.

3. IN LIGHT OF ABOVE, EMBASSY WISHES TO RECOMMEND
STRONGLY THAT RMO BASE BE MAINTAINED IN KUWAIT AND THAT
REPLACEMENT FOR DR. DYRUD BE ASSIGNED AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
MAESTRONE

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